Fall October 2017

# Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez Newsletter



"Education must not simply teach work, it must teach life." -W.E.B. Du Bois

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School Superintendent's Office Website

The Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office serves as the fiscal agent to all school districts in Santa Cruz County, and acts as a liaison to the Arizona Department of Education. Responsibilities include budget assistance, auditing, and approving payments of payroll and expense vouchers submitted from all school districts. Along with basic administrative functions, this office coordinates elections for school districts and maintains records of school personnel certification. This summer, our office was very busy with community outreach and trainings, as well as selecting the 2017 Teacher of the Year.



Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez at the 2017 Teacher of the Year Event.

#### **Upcoming Events**

Santa Cruz County Film Festival October | 19-21

University of Arizona Professional Development Workshop: Analyzing Historic Documents Through an Economic Lens | October 21

Red Ribbon Week | October 23-27

Festival Día de Muertos | October 28

Meet and Greet/Agencies and Schools | November 1

Hosting Arizona Association of County School Superintendents' Meeting | November 2

County Spelling Bee | February 2

### The 2017 Santa Cruz County Teacher of the Year



Pictured above from left to right: Nogales Unified School
District #1 Superintendent Fernando Parra, 2017 Teacher of the
Year Mr. Jigar Mehta, and Santa Cruz County School
Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez



The Santa Cruz County Teacher of the Year Event was held August 11, 2017 at the Quality Hotel Americana in Nogales, AZ. The event was coordinated between the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office and the Nogales Rotary Club. This year's Teacher of the Year recipient was Mr. Jigar Mehta, a math teacher from Nogales High School. He was one of twenty-one participants nominated to receive the award. All nominees were selected by their peers, and the recipient of this year's award was chosen by a panel of judges consisting of teachers and business leaders from within the county.



Pictured above: Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office Staff standing outside Quality Hotel Americana after a successful Teacher of the Year kickoff breakfast. Pictured left: Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District #35 Superintendent David Verdugo and Assistant Superintendent Steve Schadler at the 2017 Santa Cruz County Teacher of the Year Event.





Pictured above: Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez awarding the 2017 Teacher of the Year Runner-Ups Ms. Hallie Birkett from Rio Rico High School (left), and Ms. Journee Hayes from Patagonia Union High School (right).

#### **Summer Camps for Kids**

This summer the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office held three summer camps for the community's youth. The three camps included events hosted by the CREO Program for Youth Career Connect students, as well as the second annual University of Arizona Pharm Camp sponsored by the Healthy Students Grant for students interested in pharmacy and health sciences. Two camps held by the CREO Program included the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) Institute featuring



Pictured above: Students and Mariposa Community Health Center staff during our county's second annual Pharm Camp.

MetroMatematicas, and a College & Career Retreat led by LEAD LOCAL. Students in the STEM Institute were introduced to a high-tech laboratory and measurement instruments, and transported to Tucson for an industry field trip. The College and Career Retreat students interviewed local career leaders in industries like education, produce, and engineering, as well as visited local worksites like Holy Cross Hospital, Nogales Community Development, and the County Complex. The second annual University of Arizona Pharm Camp invited 7th and 8th grade students to the Santa Cruz County Provisional Community College to be



Pictured above: CREO Program Director Maya Donnelly with students who participated in the CREO Summer Retreat.

introduced to topics in STEM, with a focus in pharmacy and health science. The camp was under the direction of the University of Arizona's Associate Dean of the College of Pharmacy, Dr. Theodore Tong. The camp included hands-on activities, field trips, laboratory exercises, and discussions, as well as a culminating project prepared by the students to show what they learned to their families and community.

# **Professional Development for Teachers**

Santa Cruz County educators took advantage of a series of professional development opportunities this summer offered by the Superintendent's Office. This allowed teachers to earn continuing education hours and learn new methodologies to take back to their classrooms. The workshops offered were as follows: Writing Workshop, Book Studies, Technology in the Classroom, Early Childhood/Protective Families, MMSAP (Masonic Model Student Assistance Program) Training,



Pictured above: Educators standing with Dr. Joan Molera during the Writing Workshop.

and Six Sigma Training. The Writing Workshop was taught by Dr. Joan Molera, for teachers of grades 4-9. The focus was on middle school writing standards and better preparing students for the ELA AZ Merit assessment. The Book Studies workshop was taught by Pima County trainers Denise Ryan and Cindy Konrath for teachers of all grades. The study explored resources that covered differentiated instruction

resources that covered differentiated instruction and student engagement which gave the teachers a wider understanding of students and their mindset, as well as their capacities. Technology in the Classroom was taught by Kathryn Haddock of Challenger Elementary School. Participants explored how to implement technology productively in varying grade level classrooms. The Early Childhood/Protective Families workshop was taught by Jannelle Radoccia, Regional Director of Children and Family Services. This was a hands on training for educators in pre-school to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade focusing on strategies to work with both children and families in positive ways. The MMSAP (Masonic Model Student Assistance Program) was a three day training on a school-based intervention program that allows educators to recognize, intervene, and redirect at risk K-12 students. This allows them to improve their academic performance as well as their quality of life. Zigma Consulting trained 10 educators for 50 hours to learn the Lean and Six Sigma tools which earned them their White Belt Certificate, and Yellow Belt Instructor's Diploma. The main goal of this training was to certify teachers to teach Year 2 of the MetroMatematicas course elective.



Pictured above: Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez addresses educators at the Book Studies Workshop.



Pictured above: County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez, Carlos Valdes of Zigma Consulting, and Nils Urman, Program Director in Pima County stand with educators who completed Six Sigma Training.

## Santa Cruz County Fair

The 2017 Santa Cruz County Fair was held from September 15<sup>th</sup> through the 17<sup>th</sup> at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds in Sonoita, AZ. Students throughout Santa Cruz County were given the opportunity to enter art projects, according to their category, into a contest where they were displayed and judged. Year after year residents throughout Santa Cruz County volunteer to help judge the art contest. The exhibit displayed student's hard work and creative art projects. Besides the art contest, there was much to do at the County Fair. Activities ranged from playing games, to fair rides, to petting zoos. The fair brought families together as well as the community.

Pictured right: Santa Cruz County Fair trophies for winners.





Pictured left:
Santa Cruz County
School Superintendent
Alfredo I. Velásquez
and Santa Cruz County
Fair Coordinator
Patricia Barraza –
Preciado stand with
judge panel.

## **Santa Cruz County Arts for Learning Reception**

The Santa Cruz County Arts for Learning Reception was a kick-off to the beginning of a new chapter of Young Audiences in Santa Cruz County. Community supporters of the arts, along with local artists gathered to show the importance of arts integration in schools. David Dik, National Executive Director of Young Audiences was present to thank Santa Cruz County for their support of the organization for the past forty-seven years.



Pictured left: Santa Cruz Arts for Learning banner showing the partnership between the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez and the Young Audiences Arts for Learning Organization.

# Jump Back to School | Back to School Blitz

The Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office donated various school supplies that were given out to elementary students at back to school events. Nogales Unified School District #1 held the Jump Back to School event and Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District #35 held the Back to School Blitz. Along with these two events, supplies were also donated to east county public schools. In total, over 1300 elementary students from throughout the county received donated school supplies from our office.



Pictured left: Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office staff at the 2017 Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District #35 Back to School Blitz

#### **Student Council Leadership Fieldtrip**



Pictured above: Student Council members from Lincoln Elementary stand with Ms. Melina Papachoris, Ms. Mayra Garcia and Event Coordinator Ms. Patricia Barraza-Preciado

The Student Council Leadership Fieldtrip was held in May 2017, and consisted of Student Council members within Nogales Unified School District #1. Student Council members traveled to the Santa Cruz County Complex where they learned about county leadership. In attendance were Santa Cruz County heads of departments who gave a thorough description of their position within the county and their department's responsibilities. After students learned about the various county departments and their roles, students and representatives from every school were treated to lunch

## **Congratulations**

## Santa Cruz County Arizona Rural Schools Association 2017 Teacher of the Year



Pictured above: Lincoln Elementary School's Reading Specialist Ms. Vanessa Elizette Alegría-Rivas

Santa Cruz County Arizona Rural School Association 2017
Teacher of the Year, Vanessa Elizette Alegría-Rivas, is Lincoln Elementary School's Reading Specialist for kindergarten through fifth grade. She has held this position for four years, and brings seventeen years of teaching experience to Nogales Unified School District #1. Ms. Vanessa Elizette Alegría-Rivas attended Nogales High School, and during her junior year, her love for working with children clicked. She went on to attain a Bachelors of Science in Education from Northern Arizona University to begin impacting students lives as a first grade teacher in 2000. Ms. Vanessa Elizette Alegría-Rivas is a true example of a lifelong learner, she continues her education through workshops, literature, conferences and trainings which add to her bachelor's and two master's degrees to continue impacting students lives.

#### **Meet the Staff**



Alfredo I. Velásquez Santa Cruz County School Superintendent



Christopher Young
Chief Deputy
Santa Cruz County School
Superintendent's Office



Maya Donnelly
CREO Program Director
Santa Cruz County
School Superintendent's Office



Teresa A. Sprigg
Governor's Healthy
Families/Healthy Youth
and Healthy Students
Program Director
Santa Cruz County
School Superintendent's
Office



Danna Gallardo Education Director Santa Cruz County Juvenile Detention Education Program



Marisol Chiquete-Bolaina Bookkeeper Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office



Patricia Barraza-Preciado
Accounting Specialist
Santa Cruz County
School Superintendent's
Office



Dakota L. Beach
Accounting Specialist
Santa Cruz County
School Superintendent's
Office



Sergio Delgado Office Clerk Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office